

Request For Information “RFI”

Date:	August 12, 2008
Title:	VA STAR: Virginia Student Training and Refurbishment Program
Issuing/Using Entity:	Department of Education

I. INTRODUCTION

The Secretaries of Education and Technology are committed to fostering the technological development of the Commonwealth's workforce. The Secretaries are seeking Statements of Interest (SOI) from Regional Tech Centers, School Divisions and Community Colleges to create a program for Virginia students that refurbishes and recycles used computers while providing the tools for education and certification in the field of IT repair. The Offices of the Secretaries will consider responses to this Request for Information (RFI) and determine funding and next steps based on the quality and capacity of proposals. Each proposal should address these objectives:

- 1.) Refurbishes or recycles used computers based on their viability.
- 2.) Provides IT training and certification for students
- 3.) Provides a means to store, transport, and distribute refurbished equipment to local schools

Respondents should also state the number of computers they wish to receive and which IT training certificates will be issued through the program.

The primary focus of the VA STAR Program is to use surplus hardware to create a sustainable program for Virginia students that prepares them for the modern workforce. The program should create an outlet for state agencies and private entities to donate surplus hardware while giving students an opportunity to learn valuable IT skills.

II. BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Commonwealth of Virginia solicited bids from several companies through the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act (PPEA) with the goal of refreshing the Commonwealth's IT infrastructure. Following a thorough review of the submitted bids, the Commonwealth selected Northrop Grumman to work with the Commonwealth through a ten-year contract on this task.

The implementation of this refresh will require the replacement of hardware managed by the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) with hardware supplied by Northrop Grumman. Currently, 23,000 computers have been sent to the Department of General Services (DGS) as surplus, and by the end of this refresh, 15,000 more will pass through DGS.

Surplus computers from state agencies are currently held by DGS and sold in a public auction. The majority of those computers average 3 to 6 years in age and are in working order. Recognizing the potential of this massive influx of hardware, DGS designated 1,000 surplus computers to the creation of a program that will prepare Virginia students for the workforce of the twenty-first century. The Social Security Administration, upon hearing of the potential an educational refurbishment program

would have on the students of the Commonwealth, committed 6,000 surplus computers to DGS contingent upon the development of such a program.

The numbers involved in such gracious donations are promising, but daunting. Transportation, storage, and distribution of the surplus will be instrumental to the successful implementation of a program. The 7,000 computers will be stored by DGS for approximately 3 months before they impact surplus operations and will be sold. Plans that offer timely and efficient solutions to the issues of transportation, storage, and distribution will be given top priority.

The Secretary of Technology, the Secretary of Education, the Department of Education, VITA, and Northrop Grumman believe that this hardware can serve as a valuable tool in the education of the Commonwealth and will work to ensure that this one-time influx of surplus results in a sustainable program.

III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONSES

Respondents should submit an SOI that should include:

- 1) A brief statement of interest in pursuing the project for the VA STAR Program
- 2) An outline of the proposed structure of the program as well as a brief description of how it will solve the need presented by this RFI and how many pieces of hardware are required.
- 3) A road-map to make the program sustainable following the use of the computers donated by the state.
- 4) A summary of topics or issues that will arise upon the implementation of this program not identified by this RFI, as well as input on how to respond to those topics or issues.

Staff will conduct a dialogue with respondents as well as seek out more information in support of the response. As part of the dialogue process suggestions for improving responses may be given to respondents by staff. Updated responses will be accepted up until the deadline. Therefore, early responses are encouraged.

SOI's shall be returned by 4:00 PM EST on September 19th, 2008, by mail or electronically. Electronic responses should be addressed to: lan.neugent@doe.virginia.gov . Include VA STAR Response in the subject line. Non-electronic responses will also be accepted. Please send to:

Post office Box 2120,
Richmond, VA 23218-2120.

Electronic inquiries are preferred at lan.neugent@doe.virginia.gov , however, respondents may also call 804-225-2757 for additional information.